# California Regional Water Quality Control Board
# Los Angeles Region

## Samuel Unger, Executive Officer
## Executive Officer's Report
### May 11, 2015

***The Executive Officer's Report is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but rather highlights of Regional board staff activities.***

## *Executive Office*

**Public Participation Activities**

*Susana Lagudis*

- Remediation: We've set up a process encompassing site-specific cleanup and evaluation for public participation activities, and are becoming increasingly efficient in generating and distributing fact sheets and investigative and work notices in plain language to affected and potentially affected and interested members of the public for impacted sites in the vicinity of residences and businesses that may be subject to various impacted media. To date in 2015, the Regional Board has sent out some six factsheets, and a handful of investigative and work notices. Another approximately ten community assessments and factsheets are currently under review, along with two complete Public Participation Plans. Calls to public participation and project managers from the public and other agencies for more information and one-on-one dialogue have increased with each issuance, evidence that we are also becoming increasingly successful in our public communications and engagement efforts.

- Stormwater Industrial General Permit (SWIGP): Regional Board has hosted three State Board SWIGP "roadshows," and relevant materials in English and in Spanish have been posted on our website.

- Regional Board website: Although we can't change the initial interface, which is determined by the State Board, we are in the process of redesigning our links and each programs webpage(s) to make them more user-friendly, and easier to navigate. We are also creating more informative content regarding each Regional Board program, and in the early phase of preparing a link to a new webpage: "Regional Board Success Stories."

*A Watershed Management Special Report*

**Summary of Data Generated by the State Mussel Watch Program in Region 4**

*Shirley Birosik, Senior Environmental Scientist*
*Regional Programs Section*

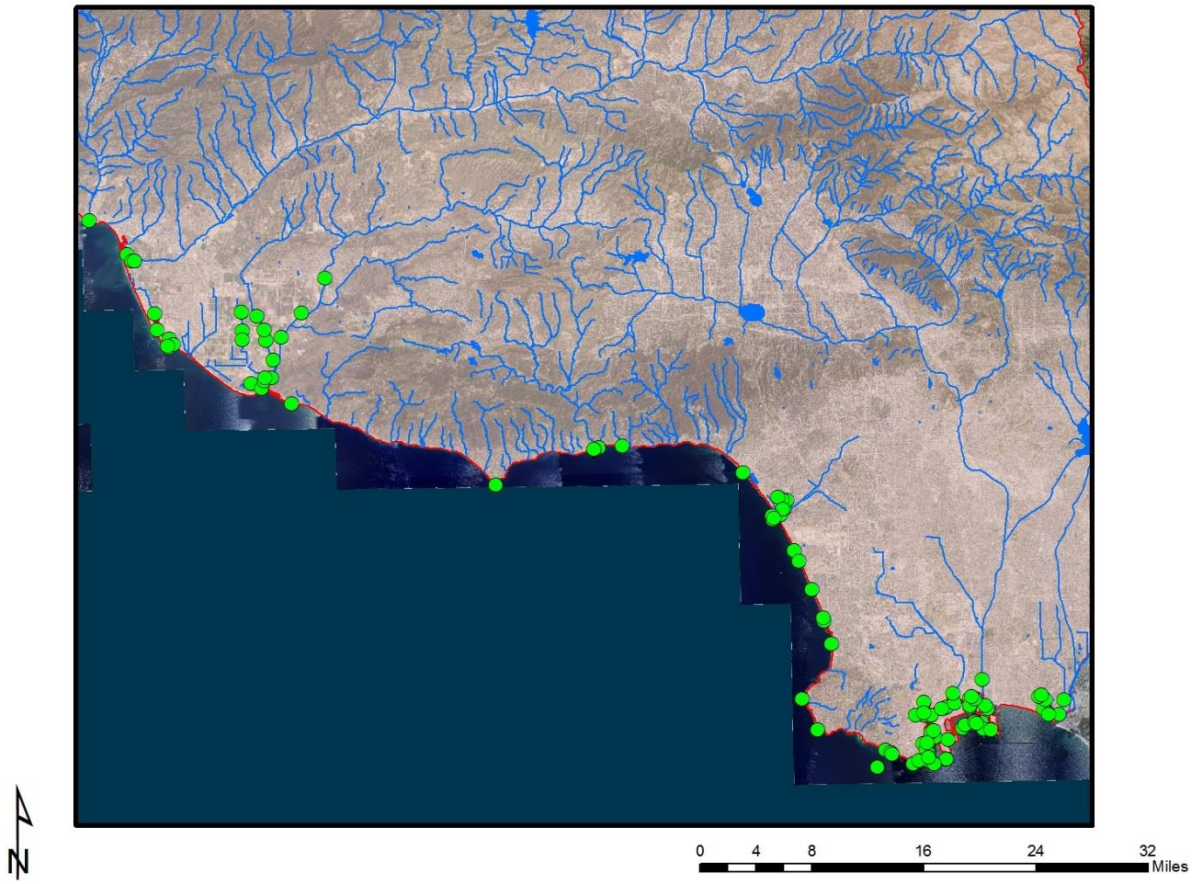
In 1977, the State Water Board launched a statewide program, the State Mussel Watch Program (SMWP), which has focused on monitoring bioaccumulation of chemicals in aquatic organisms living in coastal waters. Management and funding of the program has changed through time, but sampling has continued. The sampling program will conclude in 2016. A considerable amount of data has been collected during the course of the program and the data have been useful in assessing coastal waters, since bioaccumulation data provide a direct measure of beneficial use impairment. This summary focuses on general conclusions that may be drawn from the data currently available.

Sampling entails either transplanting mussels from a "clean" site to another coastal site elsewhere in the state to analyze concentrations of pollutants bioaccumulated by the mussels (which are filter-feeders) over a set period of time (five to six months) or collecting resident mussels from rocks in the area of interest. For sampling in harbors and marinas, mussels are generally transplanted where they can be hung in mesh bags off of docks and readily found again; the amount of pollutants they bioaccumulate are assumed to have been filtered from the water at that location since they are harvested originally from a known clean location (the Bodega Bay area). For sampling along the open coast, resident mussels are collected from rocks or pilings in those locations because there are fewer structures on which to attach bags of transplanted mussels and high wave energy is more likely to break loose an attached mesh bag. The resident and transplanted mussels are different species and resident mussels will have been at a location for an unknown length of time. This is significant because mussels will actively rid themselves of pollutants if they are exposed to them for a lengthy period of time. Consequently, small differences in pollutant concentrations between two sites utilizing different species of mussels may be expected and may not be of great significance.

While the majority of samples collected under the SMWP have used mussel tissue, in some instances the program went upstream from enclosed waters into freshwater areas and sampled with freshwater clams or collected sediment for analysis. This summary focuses only on data from mussel tissue and on general trends in the data utilizing resident or transplanted mussels. Three sites in Region 4 have been sampled virtually throughout the entirety of the program and are given more attention in this summary. Beginning in 2002 until today, these have been the only mussel watch sites in Region 4 due to funding limitations.

Except for the three long-term sites, most sites were sampled only a few times during the life of the program as funding was limited and there was a need to continue investigating potential new problem areas. Figure 1 below shows sites visited by the program in Region 4 throughout the life of the program (the Channel Islands' sites are not shown).

Figure 1. Locations of State Mussel Watch Program Stations in Region 4,1977-2013




The three long-term sites are shown in Figure 2 below and are shown relative to the location of the former Montrose facility (as a former DDT manufacturing site it was a major source of DDT to the area generally and to Dominguez Channel specifically) and relative to the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) ocean outfalls (which carried large amounts of DDT offshore). The Consolidated Slip site is located at the bottom of Dominguez Channel and at the beginning of Consolidated Slip in Los Angeles Harbor. The National Steel site is somewhat misnamed and is actually at the scrap metal facility called Hugo Neu-Proler (which was adjacent to the former National Steel site and has been occupied by SA Recycling since 2007) located near the East Basin of Los Angeles Harbor. These two sites have been assessed using transplanted mussels the majority of the time. Royal Palms is a coastal site on the Palos Verdes Peninsula near the JWPCP outfalls; resident mussels are collected at this site.

Figure 2. Locations of Long-Term State Mussel Watch Program Stations in Region 4

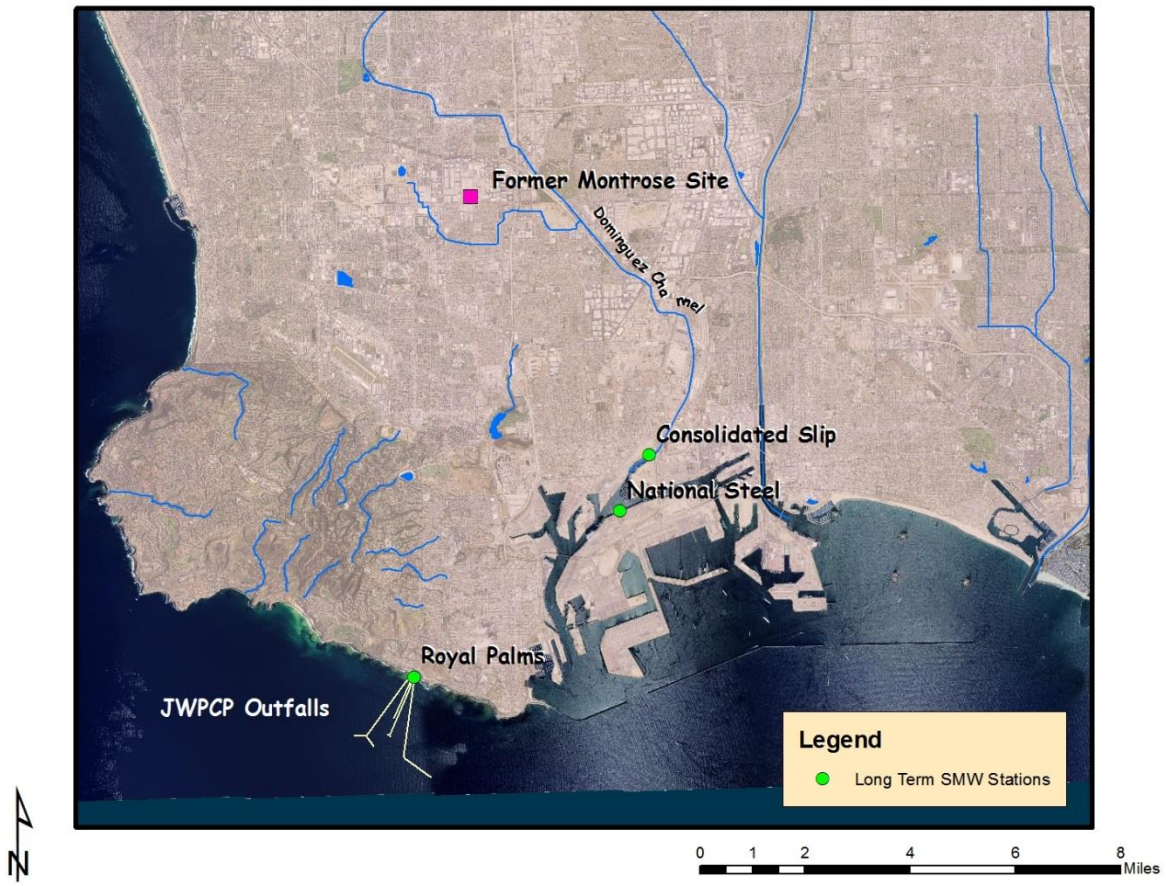
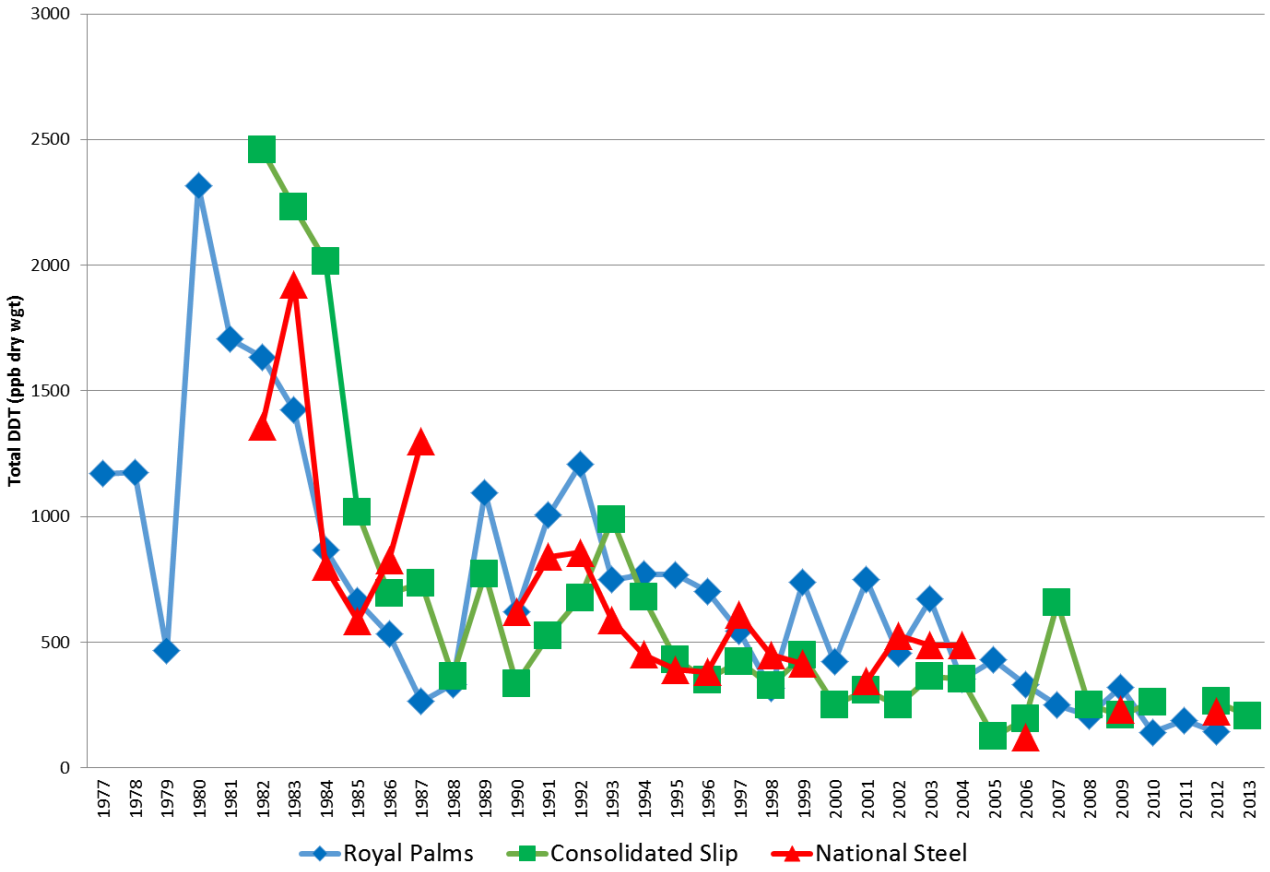


Figure 3 shows the general decline in total DDT concentrations at all three long-term sites throughout the life of the program.

**Figure 3. Total DDT at Three Long-Term State Mussel Watch Program Sites (1977-2013)**

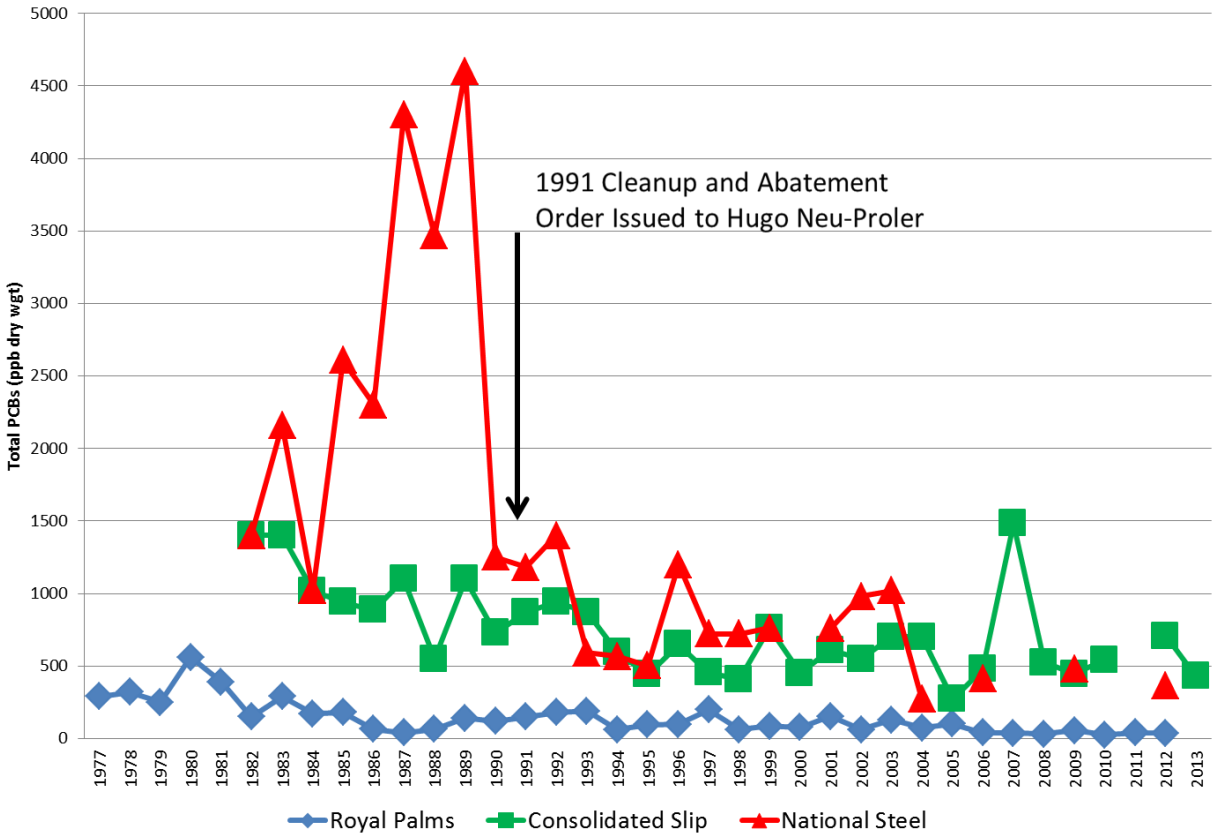



DDT was used extensively from the 1940s through 1960s; beginning in 1972, the use of DDT in California was no longer permitted except in public emergencies. Montrose ceased production of DDT at the South Bay site in 1982 and the site was paved over in 1985. While this helped reduce concentrations of DDT in stormwater runoff, the area is a Superfund site with continued soil and groundwater contamination. DDT was also discharged to the sanitary sewer for many years which resulted in discharge of DDT from the JWPCP outfalls; ocean dumping of DDT-laden material also occurred. Very high levels of DDT have also been found in the Mugu Lagoon area, likely related to its one-time extensive use in agriculture. While total DDT levels in mussel tissue at the three long-term sites are now much lower, they are still higher than levels found in mussels elsewhere in the state where DDT use was minimal.

The National Steel mussel watch station was established in 1982 and within a few years began to show excessively high PCBs concentrations, which were traced to the Hugo Neu-Proler scrap facility nearby. Figure 4 shows PCBs at this site compared to the other two long-term sites; a cleanup and abatement order issued in 1991 (followed by other cleanup activities) led to a dramatic decrease in PCBs concentrations in mussels although due to the persistent nature of

PCBs and the extensive use of PCBs historically, mussels continue to bioaccumulate more PCBs when located in enclosed industrial areas as compared to on the open coast.

**Figure 4. Total PCBs at Three Long-Term State Mussel Watch Program Sites (1977-2013)**



A more effective method to track sources of PCBs using PCB congeners (as opposed to analyzing for Arochlors, which is the historical method) was utilized several times at the long-term sites with interesting results. Figure 5 shows that the PCBs found at the National Steel site were very different from those found in Consolidated Slip and that PCBs found at the latter site were not a major source of the extremely high levels of PCBs found at the National Steel site (note the scale goes to 2,500 ppb).

**Figure 5. Details of PCB Congener Data at Two Long-Term State Mussel Watch Program Sites in 1989**

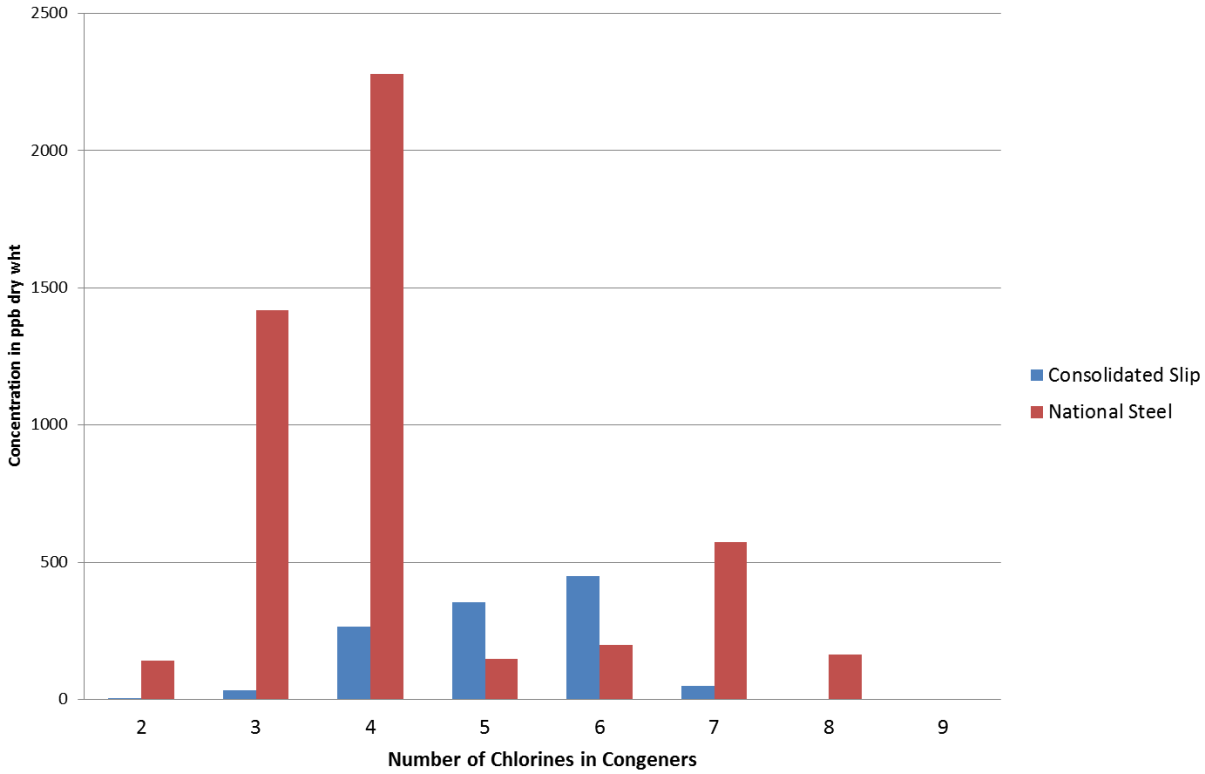



Figure 6 shows a completely different result from 2010, well after the work needed to comply with the cleanup and abatement order had been finished and other cleanup activities had occurred. Besides showing much lower amounts of PCBs (note the scale only goes up to 200 ppb), it also shows amounts and types of PCBs similar to those found in Consolidated Slip. In other words, the scrap metal facility is no longer a significant source. PCBs are highly persistent and considering the industrial nature of the area draining to Dominguez Channel, there was likely extensive use of PCBs in the area with a continuing legacy concentration found in the Los Angeles Harbor. However, use of PCBs is now much more limited than in previous decades and levels should continue to decline through time.

**Figure 6. Details of PCB Congener Data at Two Long-Term State Mussel Watch Program Sites in 2010**

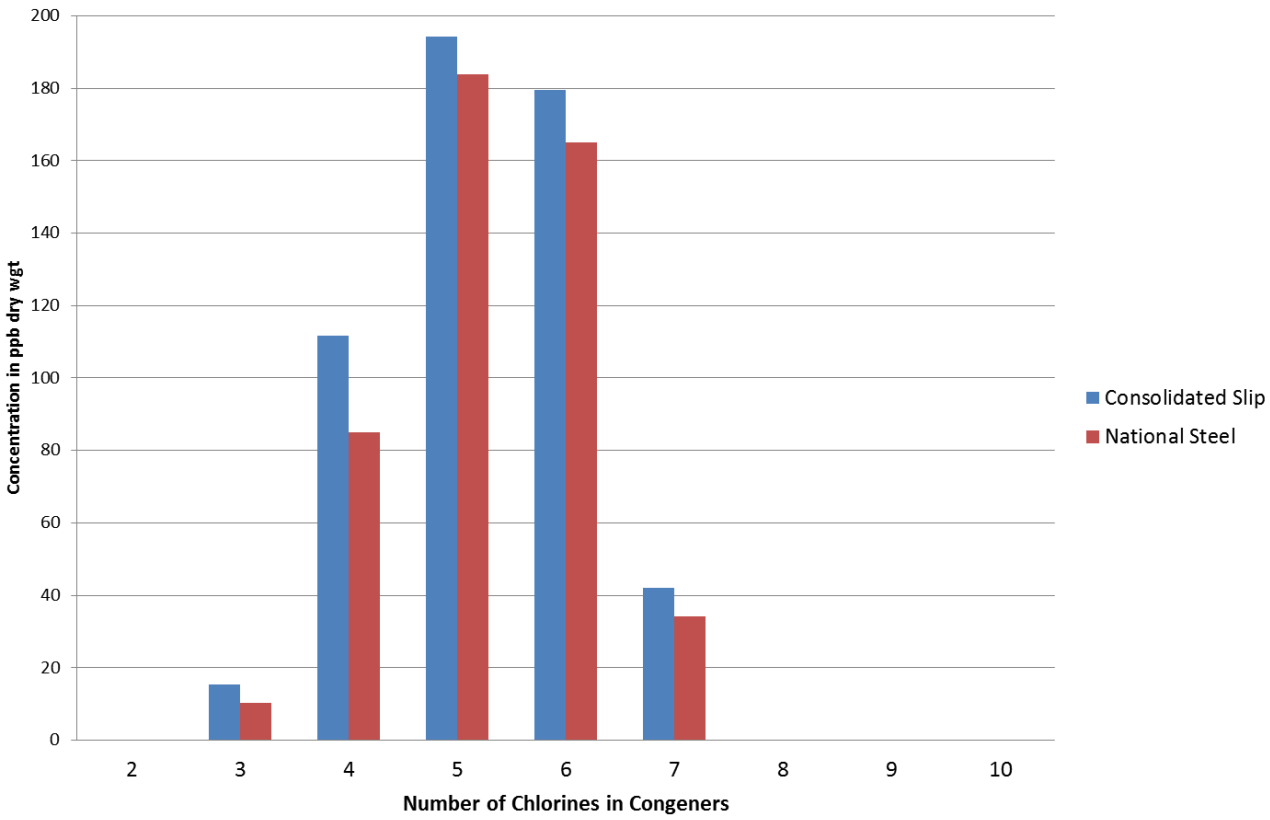
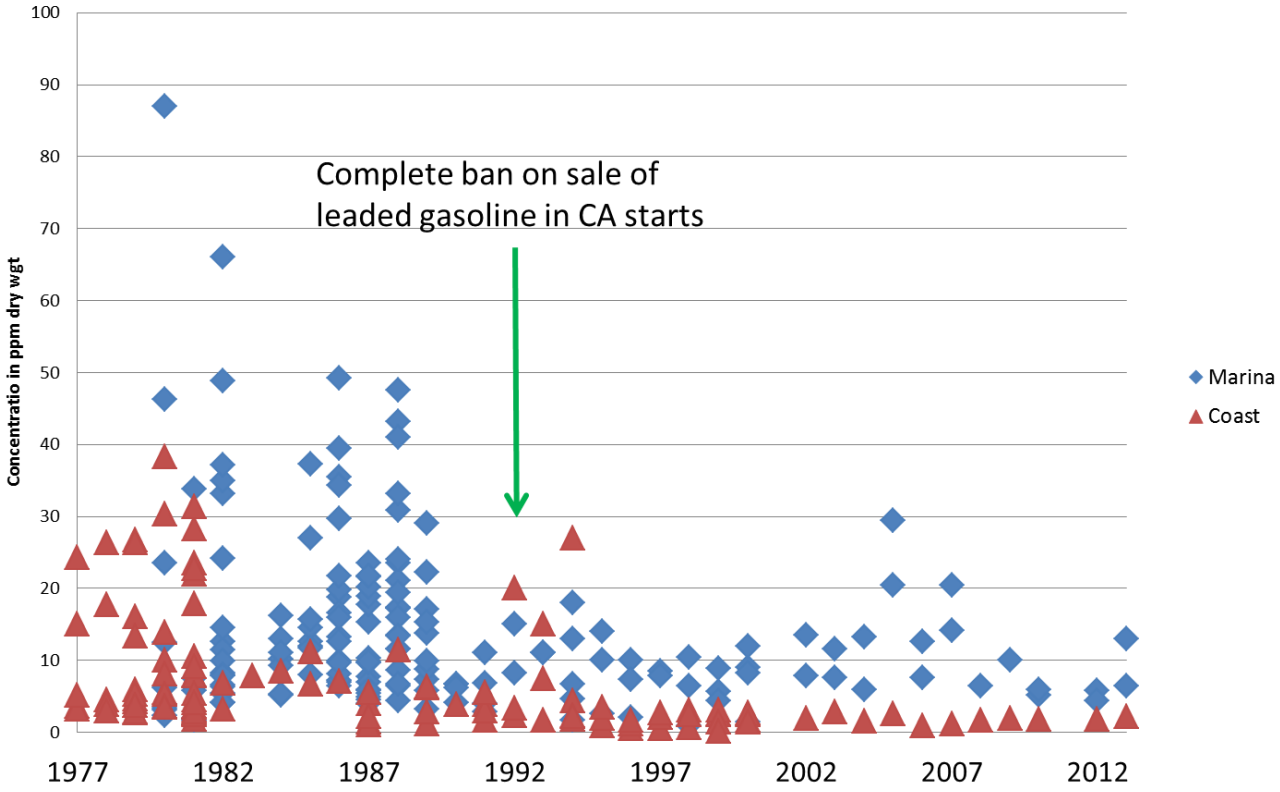



Figure 7 below shows the decrease in lead concentrations found in mussel tissue following the complete ban on sale of leaded gasoline in California starting in 1992. The graph shows lead results for all sites and all years of the program with coastal sites distinguished from marina/harbor sites. While there may continue to be other sources of lead in harbors and marinas, just by virtue of being enclosed there is less flushing of pollutants in these waters and thus, as the graph shows, mussels planted in marinas and harbors generally exhibit higher concentrations than those collected on the coast where flushing is much better.

**Figure 7. All Results from Region 4 Samples Collected for Lead by the State Mussel Watch Program During 1977-2013 Sorted by Marina versus Open Coast Stations**




In conclusion, the use of transplanted mussels or the collection of resident mussels from coastal sites through 35 years of State Mussel Watch Program sampling has revealed the considerable gains made in improving the water quality of Region 4's marine and estuarine waters. A dedicated long-term program can identify trends that are not apparent if sampling occurs over only a few years. It shows that actions taken by the federal and state government to prohibit use or discharge of highly toxic substances results in better water quality and protection of beneficial uses.

**Section 401 Water Quality Certification Program**

*Valerie Carrillo Zara and Dana Cole*

Since March 1, 2015, the Regional Board has received 7 new applications for Section 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC) actions. The following Certification actions have been issued since the preparation of the last Executive Officers Report:

| DATE OF ISSUANCE | STAFF | APPLICANT | PROJECT | ACTION |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2/3/2015 | Valerie Carrillo-Zara | Synergy/Brookfield II | Park Place Project Tract 60259 | Conditional WQC |
| 2/4/2015 | Valerie Carrillo-Zara | Taylor Morrison of CA, LLC | MTD 954 and MTD 962 Detention Basin Maintenance | Conditional WQC |
| 2/4/2015 | Valerie Carrillo-Zara | Pepperdine University | Pepperdine University Flood Control Maintenance | Modification of Conditional WQC |
| 2/4/2015 | Dana Cole | County Sanitation District No.2 of Los Angeles County | Joint Water Pollution Control Plant Outfall | Conditional WQC |
| 2/4/2015 | Dana Cole | Los Angeles County Flood Control District | San Gabriel Rubber Dam No.4 | Conditional WQC |
| 2/7/2015 | Valerie Carrillo-Zara | City of Simi Valley | West Los Angeles Avenue Street Maintenance | Conditional WQC |
| 2/17/2015 | Dana Cole | Southern California Edison | Pebbly Beach Rip-Rap Slope Stabilization | Modification of Conditional WQC |
| 2/27/2015 | Dana Cole | City of San Buenaventura | Ventura Pier: Five Year Maintenance | Conditional WQC |
| 2/27/2015 | Dana Cole | City of Long Beach, Tidelands CIP Division | Pine Avenue Pier Public Floating Dock | Conditional WQC |
| 2/27/2015 | Dana Cole | Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority | Stokes Creek Mitigation Project at King Gillette Ranch | Conditional WQC |
| 3/5/2015 | Valerie Carrillo-Zara | City Ventures | Vistas at Moorpark Housing and Road Maintenance | Conditional WQC |
| 3/9/2015 | Valerie Carrillo-Zara | Kissel Corporation | Paradise Cove Pier Repair | Conditional WQC |
| 3/13/2015 | Dana Cole | Ventura County Public Works Agency, Transportation Department | Donlan Road Realignment | Conditional WQC |
| 3/25/2015 | Dana Cole | Guided Discoveries, Inc. | Camp Fox Pier Replacement | Conditional WQC |

Certification actions recently issued and project descriptions for applications currently being reviewed can be viewed from our Web Site located at:

http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb4/html/meetings/401wqc.html

**Los Angeles County Flood Control District Soft Bottom Channel Maintenance WDR**

The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board has begun hosting a series of Working Group Meetings in conjunction with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) to share key elements and methodologies of LACFCD's maintenance of engineered soft bottom channels. The first Working Group Meeting took place on April 2, 2015 and a total of six meetings are currently planned. They are designed for group discussion with key stakeholders. These meetings will help facilitate the issuance of updated Waste Discharge Requirements in early 2016.

For additional information regarding our Section 401 Program, please contact Valerie Carrillo Zara at (213) 576-6759. Any petitions for the appeal of a Section 401 WQC action must be filed within 30 days of the date of its issuance. We encourage public input during the certification process.

## *Underground Storage Tank Program*

**Completion of Corrective Action at Leaking Underground Fuel Storage Tank Sites**
*Yue Rong*

Regional Board staff have reviewed corrective actions taken for soil and/or groundwater contamination problems from leaking underground storage tanks for the time of **March 12, 2015 through March 26, 2015,** and determined that no further corrective actions are required for the following sites:

1. Former First Group America Inc, Compton (I-20723A)
2. Former Chevron 359767 / Former Beau Rivage Mediterranean Restraurant, Malibu (R-40753)
3. Chevron Service Station No. 9-1049, Montebello (R-14330)
4. Chveron Station 9-5980, Montebello (R-09872)
5. Custom Car Wash, Montebello (R-09758)
6. 76 Station #0779, Los Angeles (900460198A)

For the case closure sites above, a total of **255** tons of impacted soils were excavated and **14,000** gallons of groundwater were treated.

**Executive Officer issued General Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs)**
*Yue Rong*

During this reporting period, the Executive Officer issued 1 General Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) to Circle K#2211182, located in Culver City (4/1/2015). The WDRs issued for injection of oxygen generating compounds to the impacted aquifer for in-situ groundwater treatment, which, comparing with ex-situ treatment, has advantage to save water resources by avoiding discharging the treated water to the ocean.

**Program Performance Summary (2015)**

| 2015 Month | Work Activity | | | | | Cleanup Mass Removal | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Case Closure | Directive & Order | Workplan Approval | Other Letter Issued | Total | Tainted soil [tons] | TPH mass [lbs] |
| January | 9 | 12 | 20 | 22 | 63 | 7856 | 86639 |
| February | 13 | 12 | 16 | 23 | 64 | 5702 | 12511 |
| March | 12 | 27 | 16 | 36 | 91 | 255 | 0 |
| April | | | | | | | |
| Total | 34 | 51 | 52 | 81 | 218 | 13813 | 99150 |

## *Groundwater Permitting and Land Disposal Section*

**Inspection at AERA Energy Taylor Lease, Ventura Oil Field**
*Enrique Casas*

AERA Energy, LLC (AREA), operates two land spreading areas in the Ventura Oil Field for drying drill cuttings and adhering muds (see attached photo). After drying, the wastes are characterized for contaminants of concern and then either reused onsite or disposed of offsite, based on the result of characterization. On March 25, 2015, Regional Board staff (Dr. Enrique Casas) conducted an inspection of the site to verify the conditions of land spreading areas. Following the inspection, staff determined that operations of the spreading areas may have a low threat to water quality and the activities should be regulated under waste discharge requirements (WDRs). Staff believes that the spreading areas are suitable to be enrolled under the State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Order No. 2003-0003-DWQ (General WDRs for Discharges to Land with a Low Threat to Water Quality). Boring wastes, which includes drill cuttings and adhering muds, are one of the categories of low threat discharges included in the general WDRs. As directed by Regional Board staff, AERA is currently in the process of submitting and Notice of Intent (NOI) for the project to be covered under the General WDRs.

**Summary of General Waste Discharge Requirements Enrolled and Terminated**
*Clarita Quidilla and Rebecca Chou*

From March 10, 2015, to April 13, 2015, five dischargers enrolled under the general Waste Discharger Requirements (WDR), and one WDR terminated. The Table below contains a breakdown for each category of general WDR.

| | | Project Manager | Date of Coverage | Date of Revision | Termination |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A.** | **General NPDES Permit for General Waste Discharge requirements for In-Situ Groundwater Remediation and Groundwater Re-Injection (Order No. R4-2014-0187)** | | | | |
| 1. | Pizza Hut #11-7488 / CI 10137 | Ann Chang | 03/20/15 | | |
| 2. | Santa Susana Field Laboratory Property / CI 10122 | David Koo | 03/20/15 | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3. | Circle K #2211182 (Former Mobil 18-LKA) / CI 10143 | Ann Chang | 04/06/15 | | |
| **B.** | **General WDR Discharge for Groundwater remediation at petroleum Hydrocarbon fuel and/or volatile organic compound impacted sites (Order No. R4-2007-0019)** | | | | |
| 1. | Alpine Shell / CI 9743 | Ann Chang | | | 03/20/15 |
| **C.** | **General NPDES permit for WDR requirements for small commercial multi-family residential subsurface sewage disposal systems (Order No. R4-01-031)** | | | | |
| 1. | Los Angeles Prayer Mountain / CI 10140 | David Koo | 03/23/15 | | |
| 2. | Water United Conservation District / CI 10145 | David Koo | 04/06/15 | | |

**Summary of Inspection Reports**
*Clarita Quidilla and Rebecca Chou*

From March 10, 2015 to April 13, 2015, staff conducted 27 pre-permitting and annual inspections.

| | **Date Issued** | **Permittee** | **Project Manager** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 10/16/14 | L.A. Prayer Mountain Retreat Center / File No. 11-034 | David Koo |
| 2. | 01/16/15 | Montebello Landfill / CI 5668 | Enrique Casas |
| 3. | 01/26/15 | Mission Water Wells / CI 10121 | Mercedes Merino |
| 4. | 01/27/15 | Bailard Landfill / CI 4035 | Enrique Casas |
| 5. | 01/27/15 | Santa Clara – Coastal Landfill / CI 5664 | Enrique Casas |
| 6. | 01/28/15 | Claremont Landfill / CI 5766 | Enrique Casas |
| 7. | 02/06/15 | Simi Valley Landfill & Recycling Center / CI 5643 | Enrique Casas |
| 8. | 02/06/15 | Grimes Rock, Inc / CI 10120 | Mercedes Merino |
| 9. | 02/10/15 | Helen Keller Park Landfill / CI 9885 | Enrique Casas |
| 10. | 02/11/15 | Toland Road Landfill / CI 5644 | Enrique Casas |
| 11. | 02/15/15 | Azusa Land Reclamation Landfill / CI 2567 | Douglas Cross |
| 12. | 02/12/15 | Cemex Construction Materials (Azusa Plant) / CI 7171 | Douglas Cross |
| 13. | 02/17/15 | Savage Canyon Landfill / CI 4469 | Enrique Casas |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 14. | 02/26/15 | Burbank Landfill / CI 5800 | Douglas Cross |
| 15. | 03/03/15 | Calabasas Landfill / CI 4992 | Enrique Casas |
| 16. | 03/05/15 | Durbin Landfill / CI 9191 | Douglas Cross |
| 17. | 03/09/15 | Chiquita Canyon Landfill / CI 6231 | Douglas Cross |
| 18. | 03/12/15 | Tierra Rejada Landfill / CI 4294 | Enrique Casas |
| 19. | 03/13/15 | Inglewood Oil Field Land Treatment Units / CI 8266 | Enrique Casas |
| 20. | 03/13/15 | Reliance Pit #2 / CI 7106 | Douglas Cross |
| 21. | 03/16/15 | Bradley Landfill & Recycling Center / CI 6434 | Douglas Cross |
| 22. | 03/16/15 | Brandford Landfill / CI 1412 | Douglas Cross |
| 23. | 03/24/15 | United Water Conservation District – Shop Building / File No. 14-077 | David Koo |
| 24. | 03/26/15 | Scholl Canyon Landfill No. 4 / CI 2846 | Douglas Cross |
| 25. | 03/30/15 | Montebello Oil Field / CI 8267 | Douglas Cross |
| 26. | 04/02/15 | Paramount Landfill / CI 8372A | Enrique Casas |
| 27. | 04/03/15 | Cemex Construction Materials, L.P. – Moorpark Facility / CI 6660 | Enrique Casas |